

Town of Blandford
Conservation Commission Minutes
January 10, 2022 6:00 PM

Commission Members in attendance: Dick Gates, Colleen Doyle, Jon Piper, Jon Letendre, and Nate Maynard (via teleconference line)

I. Review / Finalize Previous Meeting Minutes

- a. R Gates made a motion to accept meeting minutes from November 8th and December 13th. Motion seconded by J Piper and accepted by Commission unanimously.
- b. R Gates made a motion to sign off on meeting minutes on behalf of fellow Commission members due to remote meeting protocols with COVID. Seconded by J Piper and accepted unanimously.

II. New Business

- a. **Belle Fleur (Mass DEP File # 111-059) - stoppage of site work and noncompliance with the Order of Conditions**

Representatives of Belle Fleur have requested a pause in the weekly erosion control inspection protocol over the winter months while finances and logistics are being assessed. Joe Rogers of GZA proposed a revised inspection protocol with monthly inspections, or after any rainfall event of ½" or more.

R Gates made a motion to accept the revised inspection protocol as advised by GZA. J Piper seconded. Passed unanimously.

- b. **Mass DOT Violation: Rt. 23 utility installation within Buffer Zone and Riverfront Area of Potash Brook.**

Mass DOT is researching ownership of the land where utility work had begun prior to submitting an NOI. It was acknowledged that they were in violation of WPA and began work prematurely. Erosion controls have been installed. There was additional discussion regarding the abandoned adjacent home and whether it should be condemned by the town (discussion for Select Board).

- c. **Rt. 23 Potential WPA Violations**

A concerned citizen submitted a list of potential WPA violations that he felt the Commission should investigate / address:

- Mass DOT site that is currently being addressed (above).
- Belle Fleur site that is currently being addressed (above).

- Homeowner storing driveway grading material near Potash Brook (?). Material is stable and likely exempt under WPA for driveway work. Commission will keep an eye on this and address as necessary.
- Former Sheep Gate residence: heavy equipment onsite. It is unclear if work is being done or if the equipment is being stored onsite. R Gates will determine ownership via the assessor's office and send a letter of inquiry regarding potential work within 200' of Bedlam Brook.

d. Town of Blandford: North Blandford Road Project

R Gates has been involved in numerous discussions with new Hwy Superintendent Dave Waldron, as well as former Superintendent Rene Senecal, regarding proposed culvert work on North Blandford Rd. Waldron and Senecal will be gathering more specific information regarding the scope of work in order to determine what permitting will be required under the WPA. The Commission would like to proactively address this with the Hwy Department so that they can complete all necessary permitting prior to their intended project start date.

III. Ongoing Business

a. WPA & Land Use: Chris Plavcan

R Gates followed up with C Plavcan regarding his potential interest in developing a campground in Blandford. Plavcan was provided a general overview of the WPA and permitting requirements but was advised to attend an upcoming meeting if he had more specific questions.

b. Drainage Issues: Nye Brook / Huntington Rd.

No new updates. There was discussion of potentially including this project in the PASS mitigation project rather than culvert work on Gibbs Rd. if at all possible.

c. Update for B. Bernier: Rt. 23 NOI

Jeff Smith, of Salvini Associates, is working on preparing an NOI on behalf of B. Bernier and had previously stated he would have a site plan ready to submit by ConCom's January meeting and have an NOI by the February meeting. Nothing has been received to date. If no progress has been shared by the February meeting, then the Commission will need to follow up with DEP and determine enforcement steps.

d. Long Pond Conservation Area: Trail Development

Scouting and flagging of trails at the Long Pond parcel will resume in the New Year now that the hunting season is over. N Maynard will survey fellow members to setup a date.

e. Shepard Farm Conservation Area

No new updates.

f. **Discuss status of Solar Sites: PASS – N Blandford Rd. & Blandford Sun – Otis Stage Rd.**

PASS: Administrative Consent Order is still being negotiated and finalized and ConCom has not received any specific updates from DEP. Blandford Sun is also still in negotiations with no new updates. An onsite meeting with DEP was supposed to occur but has not.

IV. **Other**

a. **ConCom Liability Coverage**

Questions arose regarding liability coverage for the Commission and individual ConCom members by the Town of Blandford. Discussion was sparked due to a similar issue that had arisen in Hinsdale that required a town vote to ensure commission members were provided legal protections from potential lawsuits. This will be further investigated through conversations with the Select Board.

Richard W. Gatto
Colleen Pappas
John R. Pappas
Matthew Magnan